

REMARKS

Claims 1-91 are pending in the present application. In the Office Action dated December 21, 2004, the Examiner withdrew newly presented claims 61-71, 75-77, 81-83 and 86-91 from consideration. Accordingly, claims 1-60, 72-74, 78-80, 84 and 85 are subject to examination.

The Examiner rejected claims 42-60, 71-83 and 87-91 under 35 U.S.C. §101 as drawn to non-statutory subject matter. The Examiner also rejected claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 14, 15, 17 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,503,559 to Vari (“Vari”). Claims 1, 2, 14, 15, 22-24, 42, 43, 56, 50, 51, 54 and 57-60 are further rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,326,263 to Weissman (“Weissman”). Claims 1, 4-7, 12, 14, 17, 18, 20, 22-24, 42, 46-48, 50, 54-56, 72 and 78 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by WO 98/11842 to Billet, *et al.* (“Billet”).

Claims 3, 5, 16, 44, 45, 52 and 53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the Weissman reference. Claims 6-8 and 18 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the Weissman reference in view of the Billet reference. Claims 2, 3, 8, 15, 16, 73, 74, 79 and 80 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the Billet reference. Finally, claims 1-8, 12, 14-18, 20, 22, 23, 25, 27-32, 34-36, 42-48, 50-60, 72-74, 78-80, 84 and 85 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over European Patent No. EP 0 938,875 to Martelli, *et al.* (“Martelli”), further in view of the Billet reference.

Claims 37-41 are allowed. Claims 9-11, 13, 19, 21, 26, 33 and 49 are objected to as depending from a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening dependent claims. The Examiner is thanked for his careful attention to the present application and for his indication of allowable subject matter in the present application.

Attorney for the applicant would also like to thank Examiner Lewis for his participation in a Telephonic Interview on May 17, 2005. During the Telephonic Interview, Examiner Lewis

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and the undersigned attorney discussed the scope of the cited art and also discussed a proposed amendment.

Applicant has amended claims 1, 14, 25, 32, 42 and 50 in the present application in accordance with the previously considered proposed amendment and also in view of Examiner Lewis's remarks during the Telephonic Interview. A prompt examination of the present claims, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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MAIL CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this communication is being deposited with the United States Postal Service via first class mail under 37 C.F.R. § 1.08 on the date indicated below addressed to: MAIL STOP RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

June 21, 2005
Date of Deposit

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